

News

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Time is Ripe for New Tomato Growers Web Site from N.C. State

KANNAPOLIS, N.C. – As greenhouse tomato growers in North Carolina are gearing up for the season, N.C. MarketReady, a program of N.C. Cooperative Extension, has launched the [Tomato Growers Information Portal](#). The new Web resource is the third in a series of “grower information portals” developed by the program that provide N.C. producers with one-stop shopping for their fruit and vegetable production needs.

The Tomato Growers Information Portal currently features N.C. State University production resources for both greenhouse and field-grown tomatoes, including materials on economics, energy management and specialized equipment. Growers will find resources on marketing, food safety, integrated pest management, industry events and risk management specific to North Carolina tomato production.

N.C. MarketReady worked with Dr. Chris Gunter, assistant professor in the N.C. State University Department of Horticultural Science, and other N.C. State faculty to develop the Tomato Growers Information Portal.

“Tomatoes are a big money-making crop for North Carolina growers,” says Gunter. “The Tomato Portal will help growers optimize their production practices and build their businesses.”

Greenhouse tomatoes, in particular, are experiencing a surge in popularity. The ability to produce crops year-round in the climate-controlled structures has expanded business opportunities for growers and retailers. Roughly 37 percent of all fresh tomatoes sold in U.S. retail stores are now greenhouse grown. North Carolina ranks seventh in the nation in tomato production, growing more than one million pounds annually.

The portal can be accessed by visiting N.C. MarketReady online at www.ncmarketready.org and clicking the tab on the left menu bar.

The Tomato Growers Information Portal is a compilation of materials developed by multiple departments, programs and organizations associated with N.C. State University, as well as from other academic and agricultural sources. The portals were developed through grant funding from the N.C. Tobacco Trust Fund Commission and the Agricultural Advancement Consortium of the N.C. Rural Center. The portals were designed to optimize growers’ and Extension agents’ efforts by creating a one-stop shop for a specific agricultural commodity, in this case, the tomato.

N.C. MarketReady, formerly known as the Program for Value-Added & Alternative Agriculture, is a program of N.C. Cooperative Extension, which is an educational outreach of N.C. State University and N.C. A&T State University. N.C. MarketReady’s multidisciplinary team builds partnerships and educational resources to help North Carolina agriculture be more profitable. N.C. MarketReady is a partner of the Plants for Human Health Institute at the N.C. Research Campus in Kannapolis. Learn more at www.ncmarketready.org or www.ces.ncsu.edu.